LISTING OF THE CLAIMS

1. (currently amended) A conferencing method comprising:

receiving first conference-endpoint data for a first conference type from a first endpoint;

reading a conference type identifier from a memory, the conference type identifier specifying a second conference type for a second endpoint participating in a conference with the first endpoint;

determining whether the second conference type is different than the first conference type;

selecting a conversion program based on whether the second conference type is different than the first conference type;

reading an endpoint identifier for the first endpoint;

selecting a conversion parameter for the conversion program based on the endpoint identifier;

initiating execution of the conversion program specifying the conversion parameter on the first conference-endpoint data to prepare converted first conference-endpoint data compatible with the second conference type from the first conference-endpoint data; and

transmitting the converted first conference-endpoint data to the second endpoint.

2. (original) The method of claim 1, where the first conference type is a text messaging conference, and where the second conference type is a voice conference.

3. (original) The method of claim 1, where the act of initiating execution of the conversion program comprises initiating execution of a text-to-speech translator.

4. (original) The method of claim 1, where the act of initiating execution of the conversion program comprises initiating execution of a speech-to-text translator.

5. (original) The method of claim 1, where the act of transmitting comprises transmitting the converted first conference-endpoint data and a first endpoint identifier to the second endpoint.

6. (original) The method of claim 1, where the act of transmitting comprises transmitting the first conference-endpoint data and the converted first conference-endpoint data to the second endpoint.

7. (original) The method of claim 1, further comprising:

receiving second conference-endpoint data for the second conference type from the second endpoint;

preparing converted second conference-endpoint data compatible with the first conference type from the second conference-endpoint data; and

transmitting the second converted conference-endpoint data to the first endpoint.

8. (original) The method of claim 1, where the act of initiating execution of the conversion program comprises initiating execution of a text-to-speech translator, and further comprising the act of selecting a voice for at least one of the first and second endpoints.

9. (original) The method of claim 1, where at least one of the first conference type and second conference type is at least one of a decentralized text messaging conference and a centralized text messaging conference.

10. (currently amended) The method of claim 1, where reading an endpoint identifier comprises:

reading a name indicia that identifies the source of the first conference-endpoint data; and where:

the conversion parameter comprises a voice model conversion parameter that distinguishes between male and female voice production. ~~further comprising reading an~~

~~endpoint identifier and establishing aiding data for speech-to-text translation associated with the endpoint identifier~~.

11. (currently amended) A conferencing system comprising:

a memory comprising:

first conference-endpoint data for a first conference type received from a first endpoint;

a conference type identifier specifying a second conference type for a second endpoint participating in a conference with the first endpoint; and

a conversion program operable to prepare converted first endpoint data compatible with the second conference type from the first conference endpoint data, and

a processor operable to determine whether the second conference type is different than the first conference type and to execute the conversion program when the second conference type is different than the first conference type,

where the processor is further operable to filter, according to a filter criteria, the first conference-endpoint data, the second conference-endpoint data, or both to eliminate endpoint data that would otherwise be communicated to the first endpoint, the second endpoint, or both.

12. (original) The conferencing system of claim 11, where the first conference type is a text messaging conference, and where the second conference type is a voice conference.

13. (original) The conferencing system of claim 11, where the conversion program comprises at least one of a text-to-speech translator and a speech-to-text translator.

14. (original) The conferencing system of claim of claim 11, where the conversion program comprises a text-to-speech translator, and where the memory further comprises a speech-to-text translator.

15. (original) The conferencing system of claim 14, where:

the memory further comprises second conference-endpoint data for the second conference type received from the second endpoint; and

where the processor executes the text-to-speech translator on the first conference-endpoint data to prepare the converted first conference-endpoint data, and executes the speech-to-text translator on the second conference-endpoint data to prepare converted second conference-endpoint data.

16. (original) The conferencing system of claim 15, where the processor initiates transmission of the converted first-endpoint data to the second endpoint and initiates transmission of the converted second-endpoint data to the first endpoint.

17. (original) The conferencing system of claim 11, where the processor initiates transmission of the converted first-endpoint data and a first endpoint identifier to the second endpoint.

18. (original) The conferencing system of claim 11, where the first conference type is at least one of a centralized and decentralized instant messaging conference, and where the processor is operable to initiate transmission of the converted first endpoint data according to a pre-selected instant messaging protocol.

19. (original) The conferencing system of claim 11, where the conversion program is a text-to-speech translator, and where the memory further comprises voice data for a voice for at least one of the first and second endpoints.

20. (currently amended) The conferencing system of claim 11, where the filter criteria comprises an n–loudest filter criteria for processing only endpoint data only from n–loudest endpoints connected to a conference, including the first and second endpoints. ~~where the memory further comprises an endpoint identifier and aiding data for speech-to-text translation associated with the endpoint identifier.~~

21. (currently amended) A machine readable medium encoded with instructions that cause a data processing system to perform a method comprising the acts of:

retrieving first conference-endpoint data for a first conference type received from a first endpoint from a memory;

determining a second conference type for a second endpoint participating in a conference with the first endpoint;

determining whether the second conference type is different than the first conference type;

decoding the first conference-endpoint data with a first Coder / Decoder (CODEC) to obtain decoded first conference-endpoint data;

initiating preparation of converted first-endpoint data compatible with the second conference type from the first conference-endpoint data when the second conference type is different than the first conference type; ~~and~~

where initiating preparation includes recoding the decoded first conference-endpoint data by applying a specific CODEC, different than the first CODEC, on the decoded first conference-endpoint data; and

initiating transmission of the converted first-endpoint data to the second endpoint.

22. (currently amended) The machine readable medium of claim 21, further comprising:

negotiating with the second endpoint to determine the specific CODEC for the second endpoint;

~~where the act of determining the second conference type comprises retrieving a conference type identifier from the memory.~~

23. (original) The machine readable medium of claim 21, where the act of initiating preparation comprises initiating execution of at least one of a text-to-speech translator and a speech-to-text translator.

24. (original) The machine readable medium of claim 21, further comprising:

retrieving second conference-endpoint data for the second conference type from the memory; and

initiating preparation of converted second-endpoint data compatible with the first conference type from the second conference-endpoint data; and

initiating transmission of the converted second-endpoint data to the first endpoint.

25. (original) The machine readable medium of claim 21, where transmitting further comprises transmitting a first endpoint identifier to the second endpoint.

26. (original) The machine readable medium of claim 21, where the second conference type is an instant messaging conference and where initiating transmission comprises initiating transmission of the converted first-endpoint data according to a pre-selected instant messaging protocol.

27. (original) The machine readable medium of claim 21, where the act of initiating preparation comprises initiating execution of a text-to-speech translator, and further comprising the act of selecting a voice for at least one of the first and second endpoints.

28. (original) The machine readable medium of claim 21, where at least one of the first conference type and second conference type is at least one of a decentralized text messaging conference and a centralized text messaging conference.

29. (original) The machine readable medium of claim 21, further comprising reading an endpoint identifier and establishing aiding data for speech-to-text translation associated with the endpoint identifier.